

Di-Dah-Dit

Official Newsletter of the Parkersburg Radio Klub
1733 Gihon Rd. Parkersburg, WV 26101

HAM RADIO IN SPACE REACHES ANOTHER MILESTONE

Ham radio in space has reached another milestone with the successful installation and checkout of the first Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) Phase 2 equipment. The ISS now sports a new Kenwood TM-D700E dual-band transceiver in the Zvezda Service Module--the crew's living quarters. ISS Expedition 8 Commander Mike Foale, KB5UAC, set up the new transceiver at NA1SS earlier this month. Only official approval is needed to begin operations. Activation of the new gear will mean a power boost for the NA1SS downlink signal, which could prove especially helpful in school group contacts. The additional equipment--which soon will include a slow-scan television (SSTV) system--also opens up new operational possibilities.

"Clearly, we've got multi op, multi-station capability," ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, told ARRL. The ARISS Japan Team donated the Kenwood radio and made certain hardware and firmware modifications--including limiting its power output to a maximum of 25 W--to prepare it for flight, he said. Bauer and the ARISS US Team recently returned from Russia following successful ground testing of Phase 1 and Phase 2 equipment using a set of flight-identical ARISS antennas as

well as testing of a slow-scan TV (SSTV) system.

The Phase 2 gear will use the four antennas installed on the Service Module during space walks in 2002 specifically to support Amateur Radio operations. Addition of the new antennas, which will cover from HF to microwave frequencies, opened the door to deploying the two separate ham stations aboard the orbiting outpost. Waiting in the wings is a Yaesu FT-100 HF/VHF/UHF transceiver that could go into space in January along with the new SSTV gear.

Bauer says the second ham station with the Kenwood transceiver is near the Service Module's dinner table and the window. "This prime location will allow the crew to more conveniently use the ISS ham radio system," he said. "They'll be able to look out the window while operating from the Service Module" Complementing the Kenwood TM-D700E will be an Ericsson 70-cm handheld.

"Our intention is to operate SSTV on 70 cm with the Ericsson equipment," Bauer said, while the crew will use the Kenwood transceiver for ARISS school group contacts as well as for casual QSOs on 2 meters. The Kenwood radio also incorporates a TNC and can support the

RS0ISS packet system, not yet back in operation.

The Phase 1 "initial station" Ericsson 2-meter handheld, which has served as the only NA1SS gear for more than three years, will remain in place in the ISS Zarya Functional Cargo Block (FGB).

Details of the ARISS Phase 2 gear is available on AMSAT's ARISS Web page <<http://www.amsat.org/amsat/ariss/Papers/Phase%202%20AGM03Final.pdf>>.

FCC FUNDING

FCC enforcement funding will not decrease in new fiscal year: The omnibus budget bill that the US House of Representatives approved this week directs the FCC to maintain next fiscal year's funding for enforcement activities at least at its current level. The Congressional Record reports that a House-Senate conference agreement includes nearly \$274 million for the FCC, with all but \$1 million to be offset by fee collections. "The conferees direct the FCC to expend for enforcement in fiscal year 2004 an amount equal to or greater than the amount expended for enforcement in fiscal year 2003," the House Conference Report on HR 2673, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004 states. The US Senate will consider the budget measure in January after it returns from the holiday break.

FEMA SAYS BPL WILL "SEVERELY IMPAIR" ESSENTIAL HF OPERATIONS

A proverbial monkey wrench in the works for BPL? Expressing "grave concerns" about likely interference from unlicensed Broadband over Power Line (BPL) systems, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) told the FCC that BPL could "severely impair FEMA's mission-essential HF radio operations in areas serviced by BPL technology." FEMA responded December 4 to last April's FCC BPL Notice of Inquiry, ET Docket 03-104. Now part of the Department of Homeland Security--the agency said its primary worry is BPL's potential impact on the FEMA National Radio System (FNARS) on HF. FNARS is FEMA's primary command and control backup medium under the Federal Response Plan.

"FEMA has concluded that introduction of unwanted interference from the implementation of BPL technology into the high frequency radio spectrum will result in significant detriment to the operation of FEMA radio systems such as FNARS," FEMA asserted. "FNARS radio operators normally conduct communications with signals that are barely above the ambient noise levels." FNARS HF stations, FEMA said, typically are in residential areas of the sort that BPL might serve.

As part of the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA's perspectives on BPL could carry substantial weight at the FCC, which may issue a Notice of Proposed Rule Making as early as February. The FCC's BPL Notice of Inquiry has attracted more than 5100 comments--many of them from the amateur community.

FEMA said BPL also could render useless such "essential communications services" as the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES), the Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS) and the Civil Air Patrol. FEMA and ARRL last year signed a Memorandum of Understanding that focuses on how Amateur Radio may coordinate with the agency in disasters and emergencies.

Calling the HF spectrum "an invaluable and irreplaceable public safety resource," FEMA said there's no current alternative to HF in terms of meeting national security and emergency preparedness requirements at the national, state and local levels. The agency advised the FCC to beef up its Part 15 rules to ensure no increase in interference levels to existing FCC or NTIA-licensed communication systems. Otherwise, FEMA predicted, "any noise increase inevitably would diminish the ability to maintain essential communications" and would "directly impair the safety of life and property."

Likewise, FEMA pointed out, amateur HF transmitters could possibly interfere with and interrupt BPL service, leading consumers not familiar with Part 15 to blame licensed radio services.

Concluded FEMA: "The purported benefits of BPL in terms of expanded services in certain communications sectors do not appear to outweigh the benefit to the overall public of HF radio capability as presently used by government, broadcasting and public safety users." Additional information about BPL and Amateur Radio is on the

ARRL Web site, www.arrl.org/tis/info/html/plc/. To support the League's efforts in this area, visit the ARRL's secure BPL Web site, <https://www.arrl.org/forms/development/donations/bpl/>.

"Interference Temperature"

FCC begins "interference temperature" proceeding: The FCC has begun an inquiry and proposed rule making proceeding focusing on the concept of "interference temperature" as a means to quantify and manage interference among different services. The interference temperature model "takes into account the actual cumulative radio frequency energy from transmissions" and would "set a maximum cap on the aggregate of these transmissions," the FCC said in a public notice. The Commission's current primary approach to manage interference is to specify and limit the power output of individual devices. The FCC said the interference temperature approach "may facilitate more intensive use of the radio spectrum, creating the opportunities for new services and improving the predictability of any interference to existing services. The FCC has not yet released the Notice of Inquiry and Notice of Proposed Rule Making, adopted November 13 as ET Docket 03-237. The Commission will seek comment on various technical rules that would establish procedures and use the interference temperature model on a limited basis in the 6525-6700 MHz band and portions of the 12.75-13.25 GHz band.--FCC

PARKERSBURG AMATEUR RADIO KLUB

SEPTEMBER

The October 13th meeting of the Parkersburg AMATEUR RADIO KLUB was called to order at 7:05PM by President Blaine Auville.

There was an introduction of 27 members and guests.

The President said there was no minutes of the September Picnic BUT there was 50/50 drawing. Amanda Boston won \$16.00.

The Secretary's minutes were read and approved.

The Treasurer's report was given as being \$3,718.00.

The KLUB received a membership application from Kevin Mills. His call letters are KC8LN. It was motioned by Harold Dooley that the KLUB accept Kevin into the KLUB. It was seconded by Charlie James and approved by those present.

The President opened the floor for nominations for officers for the coming year. Jane McGuffey moved the KLUB keep the same slate of officers. Harold Dooley seconded the motion. It was passed by those present.

The 39 Phone line has been shut down. People checking of the were Curt, Irene, Jep, George, Mouser, Charlie Helmick and Kenny Harris. Kenny said the line should be repaired between 8 and 9AM Tuesday morning.

The President asked Jane McGuffey to handle the Christmas program at our Christmas Party December 13th

at the Washington Bottom Community Building.

Jep moved the meeting adjourn. Jane McGuffey seconded the motion. Adjourned at 7:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Georgia Milhoan, Secretary

PARKERSBURG AMATEUR RADIO KLUB

OCTOBER 13

The PARK held their October 13th meeting at the Bonanza Steak House on Pike Street with President Blaine Auville presiding.

There was an introduction of 21 members and guests.

JEP won the 50/50 drawing of \$15.00.

The Secretary's minutes were read and approved.

The Treasurer's report was given as being \$3655.70.

The President asked for a report on the 39 Patch. Jim Palmer said the 39 machine was repaired and working. Jim also said the 97 Repeater site was mowed and "LOOKS NICE".

President Auville reminded all the CHRISTMAS PARTY will be Saturday December 13th at 6PM. The dinner will be held at The WASHINGTON BOTTOM COMMUNITY BUILDING. Information on getting to the dinner contact any officer. Turkey, ham, drink, rolls will be furnished by the KLUB. Please bring a vegetable, salad, or dessert. The dinner will be CO-CHAIRLED by Georgia and Irene and other 'helpers'.

JEP suggested the KLUB get some-

one to be interviewed on the Early Morning WTAJ News at 5:30AM for public purposes. Larry Dale was suggested to be the interviewee.

Bob Lyons resigned his coordinator position for Tuesday night net. Curt Fouse volunteered to take the position until one was found.

JEP Motioned the KLUB adjourn at 7:35PM. / Tiny Phillips seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Georgia Milhoan, Secretary

NEW GENERAL CLASS QUESTION POOL RELEASED

The Question Pool Committee (QPC) of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators has released a revised and expanded Amateur Radio General class (Element 3) question pool into the public domain. The new question pool becomes effective July 1, 2004, and must be used to generate all General written examinations administered on or after that date.

"The pool has been expanded to 432 questions," said ARRL VEC Manager Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, a member of the Question Pool Committee, who notes that all subelements grew slightly. "The largest increase in questions this time around was in our Operating Procedures and Amateur Radio Practices subelements," he said. The General class question pool does not contain any diagrams or symbols.

The new Element 3 question pool is available on the ARRL Amateur Exam Question Pools Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/pools.html>> in Adobe PDF and ASCII text format. It includes all questions and answers relating

to Element 3.

The Question Pool Committee now is turning its attention to developing an outline for an updated Amateur Extra class (Element 4) question pool, which will be revised over the next 24 months, Jahnke said. It will go into effect July 1, 2006. The deadline to submit input to the Amateur Extra question pool syllabus is May 1, 2004.

In addition to Jahnke, members of the Question Pool Committee are Chairman Scotty Neustadter, W4WW, Fred Maia, W5YI, and John Johnston, W3BE. Commenters may address specific Element 3 questions as well as inputs to the Element 3 syllabus and question pool to the Question Pool Committee via e-mail <qpc@arrl.org>.

ON-LINE LICENSING COURSE, LOBBYING KIT PART OF ARRL'S 2004 PLAN

An on-line Amateur Radio licensing course--possibly bundled with ARRL membership--plus additional Certification and Continuing Education courses <<http://www.arrl.org/cce/>> are among the strategic objectives of the League's 2004 Operational Plan. The League also plans to evaluate its existing ARRL on-line class offerings. The item was among several the ARRL

Executive Committee (EC) designated to include in next year's plan when it met November 9 in Irving, Texas. Work on the licensing course already is under way, and the ARRL expects to announce its availability in the near future.

At a mid-September strategic planning session, ARRL Board members agreed to let the EC pick the 2004 objectives to incorporate into the 2004 Operational Plan. In the future, the full Board will handle the task. Other strategic objectives include

development of a grassroots lobbying kit for ARRL members to use when approaching congressional representatives in their home districts on legislation affecting Amateur Radio and surveying served agencies such as relief organizations to identify their present and future emergency communications requirements and areas of Amateur Radio performance that may need improvement.

The EC included some bottom-line related strategic objectives: That the League operate profitably to insure its future well being, and that it develop as ARRL Board policy a requirement that all new programs and services have a business plan and at least break even financially.

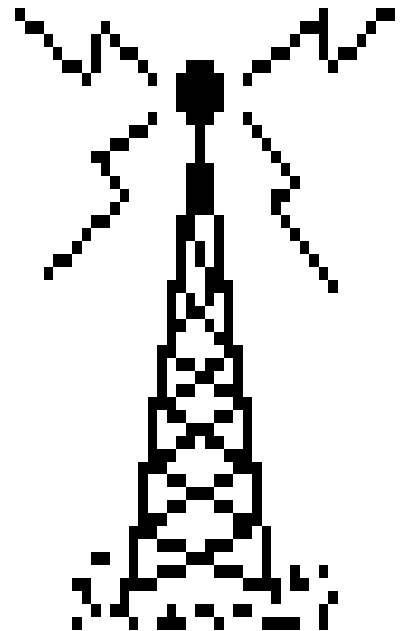
In other matters, ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, told the EC that the League is close to signing a contract calling for independent testing and measurement of Broadband over Power Line (BPL) interference characteristics. Earlier this year, the FCC issued a Notice of Inquiry, ET 03-104, that enthusiastically endorsed the prospect of BPL, which the ARRL and others feel poses the potential of possibly severe interference to licensed HF radio services. The contract would include certification by professional engineers.

The EC discussed and developed draft proposals to implement changes in US Amateur Radio rules in the wake of World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 (WRC-03). Among other significant changes, WRC-03 left it up to individual countries whether to require a Morse code test for access to amateur high-frequency allocations. The ARRL Board of Directors will discuss the EC's recommendations in detail at its January 2004 meeting.

The EC also voted not to go forward

with an appeal of FCC actions to permit expanded unlicensed Part 15 operations in the 24.05-24.25 GHz band. The ARRL had filed a Petition for Review October 22 with the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit of two FCC orders that would allow certification of unlicensed 24-GHz equipment at field strengths 10 times the level Part 15 rules now permit. After discussing the pros and cons of the case and the minimal prospects for a positive outcome, the Executive Committee voted to withdraw the League's appeal.

Minutes of the November EC meeting are available on the ARRL Web site <http://www.arrl.org/announce/ec_minutes_472.html>.



The PARK Klub held it's Christmas dinner on December 13th. at the Washington Bottom Community Building. A good time was had by all and a lot of food was consumed. The entertainment was a very nice musical performance by Arch's Granddaughters and some singing be Commie and Jane. Wwe finished off with some carol singing (?) by the whole Klub.

Thanks to Jep for these fine pictures of the event and the picture of the Repeater cleaning crew from earlier this year.

WHAT A CREW



THANKS A BUNCH

Jane Leading

Merry Melodies



CONGRESSIONAL RECESS PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE AMATEUR RADIO BILLS

Just as the US House of Representatives was about to adjourn for the year, the Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act, HR 713, picked up three new cosponsors. The addition of Democrats Sander M. Levin of Michigan, Brad Sherman of California and Chris Van Hollen of Maryland brings the cosponsor list to 77. The nation's lawmakers now have headed home and won't be back in Washington until January 20. ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, suggests that League members take advantage of the opportunity--while members of Congress are on their home turf--to visit their local offices and urge support for the spectrum protection measure and for the so-called "CC&R bill," HR 1478.

"It wouldn't hurt to stop by and drop off a QSL card with a message asking for support," Haynie said. "That's what it's going to take. Cards and letters from individual voters do make a difference." Judging by the number of cosponsors to date, Haynie says, the spectrum protection bill appears to be gaining the attention of lawmakers.

Other recent Spectrum Protection Act

cosponsors include Anibal Acevedo-Vila (D-PR), Gil Gutknecht (R-MN), Bob Filner (D-CA), Betty McCollum (D-MN) and Brian Baird (D-WA), who signed aboard during November.

Identical versions of the Spectrum Protection Act have been introduced in the House and Senate. The number of cosponsors for the Senate version, S 537, remains at eight. Sponsored in the House by Rep Michael Bilirakis (R-FL) and in the Senate by Sen Michael Crapo (R-ID), the bill would require the FCC to provide "equivalent replacement spectrum" to Amateur Radio if the FCC reallocates primary amateur frequencies, reduces any secondary amateur allocations, or makes additional allocations within such bands that would substantially reduce their utility to amateurs.

Meanwhile, the cosponsor count on the CC&R bill--known formally as HR 1478, the Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Consistency Act of 2003--is holding at 29. Sponsored by Rep Steve Israel (D-NY), the CC&R bill would require private land-use regulators such as homeowners' associations to "reasonably accommodate" Amateur Radio antennas consistent with the PRB-1 limited federal preemption. The ARRL is seeking a spon-

sor for a companion bill in the US Senate.

For guidance on the best methods of contacting your members of Congress, see "Communicating with Congress," by Derek Riker, KB3JLF, on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/news/bandthreat/0304046.pdf>> or in the April 2003 issue of QST (p 46).

Additional information--including the bills' texts, sample letters and information on how to write members of Congress--is on The Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act of 2003 Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/arspa.html>> and on the HR 1478, The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Consistency Act of 2003 Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/hr1478/>>.

Those writing their lawmakers on behalf of the Spectrum Protection Act are asked to copy their correspondence to the League via e-mail to specbill03@arrl.org. Those writing on behalf of the Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Consistency Act, HR 1478, are asked to copy their correspondence to ccr-bill@arrl.org.

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